



United States Department of State

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

FEB 22 2006

Dear Mr. Waxman:

Thank you for your letter of February 6 urging the United States to take strong action to support Israel's full participation in the United Nations.

The United States is committed to full and equal Israeli participation throughout the United Nations system, including advocacy of Israeli participation in consultative groups specific to UN technical and specialized agencies in Geneva, Paris, Nairobi, Vienna, and Rome.

Intensive U.S. efforts led to Israel being granted full membership in the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG) at UN headquarters in New York in May 2000. This action provided Israel temporary membership in WEOG for an initial period of four years to enable Israel to seek election to offices within the UN system. Israel, with U.S. support, committed to active efforts to seek membership in the Asian Group, its geographic home, during that four-year period. Unable to fulfill this goal, Israel was granted renewed membership in WEOG in April 2004. In 2005, Israel announced its candidacy for a WEOG Security Council seat for the 2019-20 term.

Since Israel became, under the terms of its WEOG membership, fully eligible to compete for election to UN limited membership bodies for vacant seats allocated to the WEOG, it has been elected to all bodies for which it has sought membership. Significantly, in June 2005, Israel was elected for the first time to serve as one of 21 vice presidents of the 60<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

The Honorable  
Henry A. Waxman,  
House of Representatives.

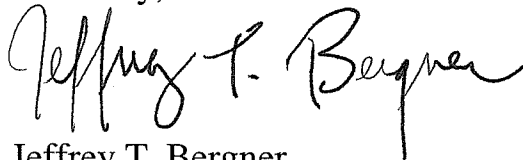
The United States has continued its efforts to gain the same status for Israel in WEOG or equivalent consultative groups outside of New York. Over the past year, the United States lobbied to facilitate Israel's bid to gain full participatory membership in Group B (a regional grouping roughly equivalent to WEOG) of the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva. Likewise, we supported Israel's interest in joining an informal grouping called the Industrial Market Economy Countries (IMEC), which operates at the International Labor Organization in Geneva. We have strongly urged EU member states and Japan to support the inclusion of Israel in these bodies.

The United States continues to support Israel's participation in other UN consultative groups such as JUSCANZ (Japan, U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Iceland, Mexico, Norway, and Switzerland), where economic and environmental issues are discussed.

U.S. diplomats, including Ambassador Bolton in New York, continue to speak out forcefully and frequently in numerous UN bodies and to governments abroad to promote Israel's participation in UN meetings and conferences and that Israeli interests are given fair consideration. Please be assured that the United States remains fully committed to Israel's full participation in the United Nations and will continue to work actively toward the realization of this goal.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffrey T. Bergner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" and last name "Bergner" clearly legible.

Jeffrey T. Bergner  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs